# 8127.0 - Characteristics of Small Business, Australia, 2001

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## Small businesses in Australia dominated by men, at home and online

The average small business in Australia is home based, operated by a male and making good use of IT facilities, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

There were almost 1.2 million small businesses in Australia at June 2001 which were operated by approximately 1.6 million people. Just over one million were run by men (1,070,300) compared to half a million run by women (526,900).

Approximately two-thirds (67%) of small businesses reported they were using computers in their business operations. Of these businesses just over half (53%) indicated they had access to the Internet.

The most common usage of the Internet was for e-mail (44% of all small businesses, or 83% of businesses with the Internet) and research (42% and 79% respectively). Almost one-fifth (18%) had used the Internet for direct e-commerce by making or receiving payments via the Internet.

Most (41%) operators' highest educational attainment was a school education, however almost as many (38%) had attained a certificate level and 21% had an advanced diploma or above.

Of the small businesses operating at June 2001, 14% had been in operation for less than a year, 35% for 1 year but less than 5 years, 19% for 5 years but less than 10 years and 32% had been in operation for 10 or more years.

Home based businesses made up over two-thirds (67%) of the total small business picture in Australia. More than three-quarters of a million (778,400) either operated from home (with no other premises other than the home(s) of the operators), or at home (where most of the work of the business was carried out at the homes of the operators). These home based businesses involved close to a million (998,800) operators, representing the majority (63%) of all small business operators.

More details are available in **Characteristics of Small Businesses, Australia** (cat. no. 8127.0).

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